

Milestone FAQ

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In order for students to understand precisely their standing in the class, a Milestone Reference was released along with a Milestone Worksheet. The worksheet will aid the students to accurately and easily calculate their points, so they may identify their points on the Reference.

How the grading policy was updated

The grading policy was left very much unchanged. Unchanged is the 30/30/40 weights of midterm, final and problem sets. However, the administration had annulled the finals period, and so that final test was replaced by a final project.

How the milestone points are calculated

The worksheet is helpful in providing details of the calculation. Each of the 6 problem sets count equally. The obtained points for a problem set is divided by the *maximum* points possible on the problem set giving a value between 0 and 1. This is multiplied by a *contribution* factor. The contribution factor for one problem set is the total contribution possible by all problems sets divided by the number of problem sets, $40/6 = 6.667$

Midterm points are then added. As the midterm was out of 30 points, and the contribution of the midterm is 30 points, contribution factor for the midterm is 1.

The Milestone Worksheet can do this calculation for the student.

How to use the milestone adjusted points

The Milestone Reference lists in sorted order achieved points among all students. After the calculating their achieved points, the student can locate that number on the reference and hence find exactly their ranking.

What about my letter grade?

The course is B centered.

The typical distribution of points would have a clustering of achieved points around the median value. This defines the average or typical performance and defines a B level of achievement. A student with points close to the median value receives a B, often the middle 1/3 or middle 1/2 among the values.

Data exploration

The student can evaluate personally this cluster by observing the data on the Milestone Reference.

Two views of the data are provided, to identify the middle cluster of points. The histogram boxes points into bins and counts the bin. Referring to the histogram on the reference, the large middle box shows that the points are well distributed to define an average level of work. The middle box is center situation between the extremes, and contains in its span a good percentage of the values.

The box and whiskers chart confirms this collection of points being of an average level of work. The chart also shows outliers, and indicates a successful distribution of points as the points take the full range of values. In particular it indicates that there was a fair number of A grades, attesting to the appropriateness even of the more difficult problems.